

August 26, 2016

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois House of Representatives,
99th General Assembly:

Today I return House Bill 5931, which would require an immediate 40% increase in taxpayer-funded wages for certain professionals, but without providing any funding.

We should first acknowledge the difficult and important work of these professionals, who assist persons with intellectual and development disabilities in residential and day programs. Many of these professionals have not had a wage increase in years. I am open to finding a responsible way to increase wages for these professionals, but unfortunately this bill is not the answer.

The national average hourly wage for these workers is \$10.71, in line with current Illinois wages. House Bill 5931 would immediately increase the Illinois wage to \$15.00 per hour, significantly above the national average. The bill would increase the cost of caring for people with development disabilities by \$330 million per year, of which Illinois taxpayers would be required to pay at least half. The bill does not provide any mechanism for funding this additional cost.

We should work together to pass a balanced budget. In that context, we can examine savings, program changes, or funding sources that could enable us to better use taxpayer dollars for this and other priorities. Through such a process, we can find the appropriate and affordable way to fund an increase in wages. But until then, it would be fiscally irresponsible to commit the State to payments for which it has no available funding.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(b) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 5931, entitled "AN ACT concerning State government", with the foregoing objections, vetoed in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner
GOVERNOR